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S E C R E T SANAA 001684

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [PTER](#) [ETTC](#) [YM](#) [COUNTER](#) [TERRORISM](#)

SUBJECT: WEAPONS BUYBACK REDUX

REF: SANAA 1590

Classified By: Ambassador Edmund J. Hull, for Reasons 1.5 (b) and (d)

1. (S/NF) Brigadier General Shater, under orders from President Saleh, held a 7/2 viewing of ROYG proceeds from recent weapons buyback collection efforts for the Ambassador and other USG officials (reftel). On July 6, Shater met with the Ambassador to ascertain the U.S. reaction to the display and to discuss ROYG's ongoing arms control strategies, including the weapons buyback program. Also in attendance were DATT, PolOff (notetaker), and Ossami al-Shami from Presidential Protocol. (Comment: Al-Shami's presence indicates the President's personal oversight of this recent exchange. End comment.)

2. (S/NF) Ambassador said that initiatives like the weapons buyback program are extremely important because of reports indicating that arms and munitions from Yemen were used in the Riyadh attacks. However, citing similar buyback programs' creation of secondary markets, the Ambassador stressed that the U.S. will not attempt to purchase billions of dollars of weapons worldwide -- but the U.S. will help with technical assistance.

3. (S/NF) Ambassador reiterated the April and 7/2 offer of assistance (reftel) in the form of a DIA team. This team would consist of specialists capable of helping ROYG catalogue current stockpiles and future acquisitions. This data could then be incorporated into a database that would allow both ROYG and the U.S. to ascertain the origins of weapons purchased through the weapons buyback program, seized at borders, or used in terrorist incidents worldwide. (Note: Depending upon the findings and recommendations of the DIA Team, this may include the acquisition and installation of computer and commo systems capable of sustaining a database. End note.)

4. (C) Shater said he would take the U.S. offer to the President. He also noted that he believes draft arms control legislation, designed to tighten controls on illicit trade and ban the possession of heavy weapons, will be passed by parliament this session -- despite political and popular opposition.

5. (S/NF) Comment: This carefully orchestrated exchange shows ROYG's commitment to controlling the illicit arms trade and the President's desire to secure external funding to expand ongoing efforts. The continued removal of weapons from the local market, legislation prohibiting their possession, and the potential for increased technical capabilities as offered by a DIA Team are encouraging developments. End comment.

HULL